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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC-03024-87

1 September 1987

Senior Review Panel

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Senior Review Panel Comments on Draft
Concept Paper and Terms of Reference (TOR)
for NIE 11-15-88: Soviet Maritime Strategy
and Programs Toward the 21st Century,
internally dated 14 July 1987

1. The Panel considers this project particularly significant and timely. We endorse its intention to re-examine the previous Community judgment that the Soviet Navy is evolving toward a balanced fleet capable of a full range of peacetime and wartime missions, including global power projection and sustained operations on distant seas. We note that the drafts are tentative, provisional, and subject to revision after further scheduled consultations and briefings. Our comments are correlative.

2. Scope Note. A number of the findings and conclusions of this section go to the heart of the proposed analysis. It would be important, in our view, to regard them as hypotheses to be examined and not as the estimate's stipulated and controlling assumptions. It would be equally useful for the text to highlight the shifts in judgments that the drafters appear to have in mind; isolate the bases for earlier and overtaken views; and identify the particular components of change.

3. Key Questions. We suggest an additional two:

a. On the significances of the developing network of Soviet overseas bases. The text, we think, should examine both the expansion of the Soviet base complex since 1982 and the emerging role of overseas, land-based facilities, present and future, in Soviet naval strategy, tactics, and force compositions.

b. On implications for US defense planners. The TOR raise the issue of policy implications in several places but not in a systematic way, or in the separate section which it clearly merits. A Key Question might assist.

4. Soviet Maritime Strategy. The papers seem to focus exclusively on the Soviet Navy. Maritime strategy suggests a

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broader approach which includes the full range of Soviet seapower--naval forces, merchant, oceanographic and fishing fleets, intelligence collectors, and auxiliaries. The drafts seem to be using "maritime" and "naval" interchangeably. Is that the intention? If Soviet Naval strategy is the central theme of the estimate, the title should be changed to more accurately reflect the limited scope of the estimate. We think the policy reader would like to see a definition of "Maritime Strategy"--if it is employed differentially from "Naval Strategy"--which presumably would precede the question "Does it exist?" (TOR, page 9)

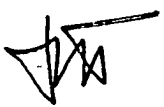
5. Trend Analysis. The papers are admirably forward-looking in orientation. To buttress the important new thesis--and if not already intended--we think the TOR should include a brief review of developments in Soviet naval operations, budgetary allocations, foreign basing/support facilities--especially Cam Rahn Bay--and the like (summarized in tabular form) since the previous NIE 11-15-84.


6. Command, Control, and Communications. The TOR refer to the subject under "Other Programs" at page 16. We suggest that its crucial importance to any naval activity indicates separate and highlighted examination in the text and appropriate emphasis in the Key Judgments.

7. Alternative Scenarios. We miss any analysis of alternative scenarios for Soviet naval strategy and programs. Is there no room for a different scenario during the next decade or more to the end of the century--the time frame of the estimate? Could there not be a re-orientation of Soviet strategy and programs? Even if the evidence points toward one set of conclusions, we think the policy reader would welcome an informed judgment on other plausible outcomes, which should be reflected in the structure of the Concept Paper/TOR.


 William Leonhart


 John B. McPherson


 James D. Theberge


 Richard L. Walker

cc: Chairman, NIC
 VC/NIC (Mr. Fuller)
 VC/NIC (Mr. Hutchinson)
 NIO for GPF

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